Amendments to the Claims

1. (Previously Amended) A process for the manufacture of L-arabinose, characterized in that, vegetable fiber selected from the group consisting of envelopes of corn grains, axis of ear of corn, wheat bran, barley bran, oat bran, rye bran, rice bran, defatted rice bran, sugar beet fiber and apple fiber is contacted with an acid, wherein an acidic hydrolysis is carried out under such conditions that

1) the concentration of acid is within the range of 0.01N to 0.5N,

2) the temperature is in the range of 80°C to 150°C, and

3) the total amount of the saccharides decomposed and eluted during the acidic hydrolysis is 30% or more on the basis of the dry substance to be hydrolyzed and the proportion of L-arabinose in the total amount of the acid-hydrolyzed monosaccharides is 50% or more, and

L-arabinose contained in the vegetable fiber is selectively produced.

2. (Original)The process for the manufacture of L-arabinose according to Claim 1, characterized in using the vegetable fiber which contains 10% or more of at least L-arabinose as a part of the constituting saccharides on the basis of the dried vegetable fiber.

3. (Previously Cancelled)

4. (Previously Amended) The process for the manufacture of L-arabinose according to

Claim 1, characterized in carrying out the acidic hydrolysis under such condition that the solid concentration of the vegetable fiber is within the range of 3% (w/w) to 20% (w/w).

5. (Previously Cancelled)

6. (Previously Cancelled)

7. (Previously Amended) The process for the manufacture of L-arabinose according to Claim 1, characterized in separating the acid-hydrolyzed solution into two sections including a section of L-arabinose-rich solution and a section of xylooligosaccharide or galactooligosaccharide and insoluble residue.

8. (Currently Amended for the Fifth Time) A process for the manufacture of L-arabitol, comprising:

selecting a vegetable fiber from the group consisting of envelopes of corn grains, axis of ear of corn, wheat bran, barley bran, oat bran, rye bran, rice bran, defatted rice bran, sugar beet fiber and apple fiber;

performing an acidic hydrolysis under such conditions that the concentration of acid is within the range of 0.01N to 0.5N, the temperature is in the range of 80°C to 150°C, and the total amount of the saccharides decomposed and eluted during the acidic hydrolysis is 30% or more on the basis of the dry substance to be hydrolyzed and the proportion of L-arabinose in the total amount of the acid-hydrolyzed monosaccharides is 50% or more to selectively produce L-arabinose; and [the process according to claim 1 further comprising a step of]

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hydrogenating the solution containing L-arabinose to produce a sugar alcohol containing L-arabitol.

9. (Previously Cancelled)

10. (Previously Amended) A process for the manufacture of L-arabinose, characterized in vegetable fiber selected from the group consisting of envelopes of corn grains, axis of ear of corn, wheat bran, barley bran, oat bran, rye bran, rice bran, defatted rice bran, sugar beet fiber and apple fiber is contacted with an acid, an acidic hydrolysis is carried out under such a condition that

1) the concentration of acid is within the range of 0.01N to 0.5N,
2) the temperature is in the range of 80° C to 150°C,
3) the total amount of the saccharides decomposed and eluted during the acidic hydrolysis is 30% or more on the basis of the dry substance to be hydrolyzed and the proportion of L-arabinose in the total amount of the acid-hydrolyzed monosaccharides is 50% or more, and

subsequently the acid-hydrolyzed solution is separated into two sections including a section of L-arabinose-rich solution and a section of xylooligosaccharide or galactoorigosaccharide and insoluble residue, and L-arabinose contained in the vegetable fiber is selectively extracted.